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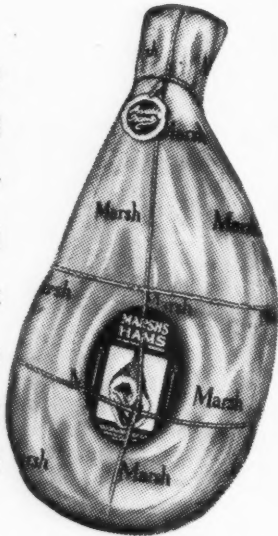
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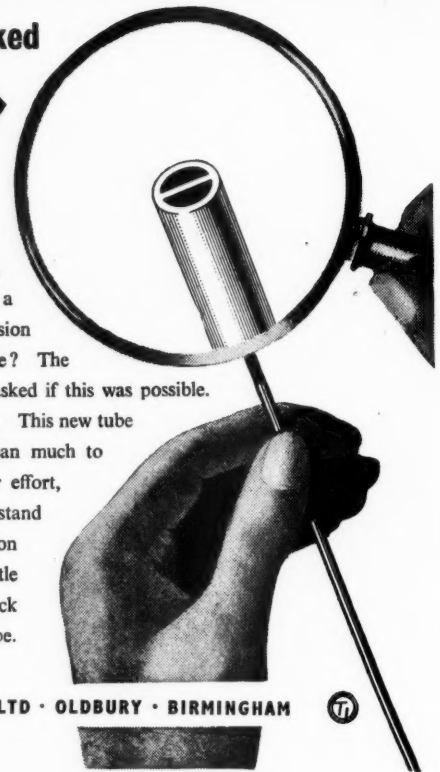
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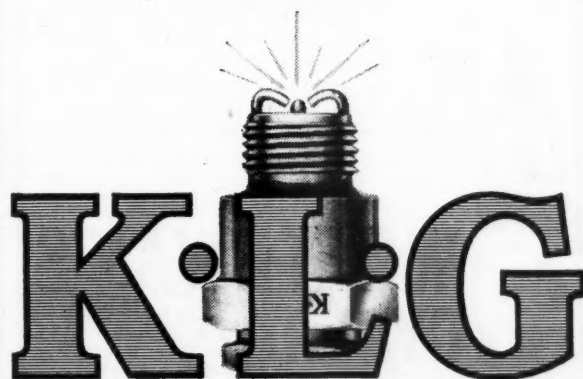


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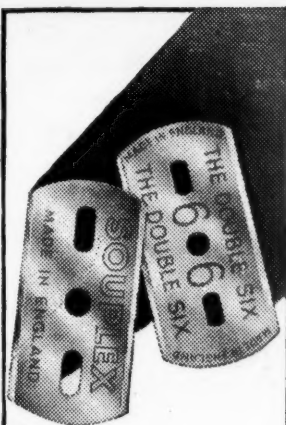


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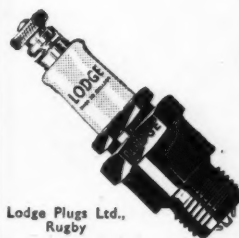
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INDUSTRY today is not averse from taking customers behind the scenes. It was very different in the latter half of the 19th century when manufacturing processes were deep and carefully guarded secrets.

At this period Courtaulds silk crapes were at the pinnacle of their popularity, and their designs and processes were both exclusive and inimitable. The firm's partners alone knew the secret of the final finishing which gave these crapes their unique effects.

Today the vast Courtaulds enter-

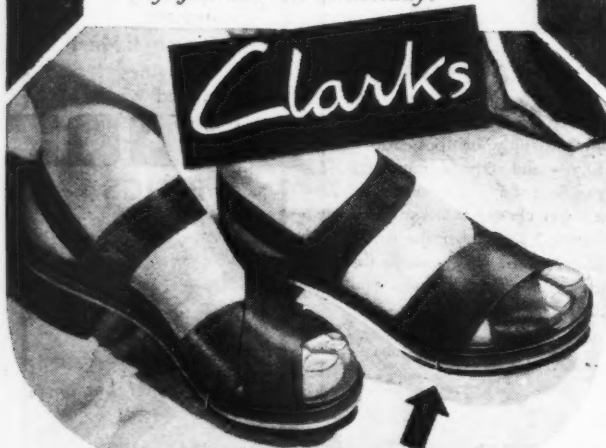
prise seeks not to hide but to broadcast the improvements achieved after years of research and development.

Despite the present concentration of the Company's full energies on war work, research goes on with unabated vigour. The results will be apparent to everybody when Courtaulds lovely rayons, so greatly admired before the war, make their reappearance, more perfect, and more serviceable than ever. There will also be new Courtauld products to assist in raising standards of life for all.

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Though long the months
I have to work
And short the weeks
when I may play,
In Sandals with
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My feet are on a holiday.



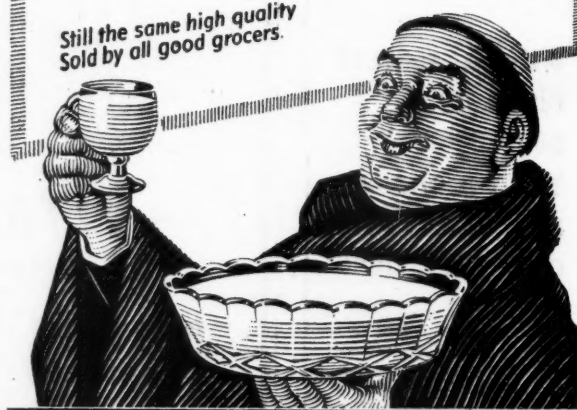
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PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCVII No. 5400

July 26 1944

Charivaria

TIME marches on. Another week or two and we shall be nearing the first anniversary of Italy's entry out of the war.

Field-marshal von Kluge's appointment in place of Field-marshal von Rundstedt is said to have confirmed his worst fears.

A large body of German troops had a narrow escape on the Eastern Front. They gave themselves up without a general and were very nearly sent back for one.

The war moves towards Germany's inner fortress. Neutral observers are having to crane their necks.



Great Expectations

"Expected in foal high-class Percheron Stallion; £100."

Advt. in S. African paper.

Simpler car designs are promised for after the war. Some of the pre-war models were getting so complicated that even a child couldn't understand them.

The German authorities have distributed leaflets throughout the Reich advising citizens what to do in case of invasion. Fuller instructions will be given later by the Allied Expeditionary Forces.

"A buzzing in the ears is not symptomatic of anything serious," says a doctor. That's what *he* thinks!



Despite the prevalence of rumours suggesting a crack in the morale of the Nazi party, recent assertions by the Fuehrer indicate that Hitler is still solidly behind him.

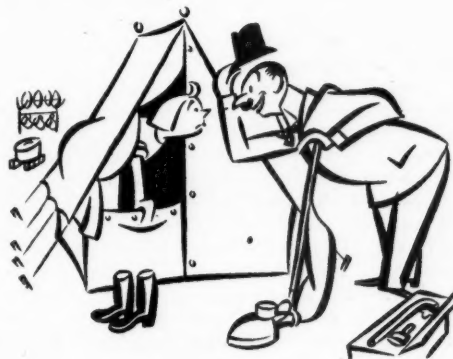
Just by way of a change, we understand, this week a new Papen plot has uncovered some Secret Service agents.

A visitor to an industrial town which had modelled itself on a popular seaside resort for its "Holidays at Home" scheme complains he was given a poky little room overlooking the gasworks. As if anything could have been more realistic.

In another two months reliable authorities state that the European scene will have changed so much that it is as well for them not to predict anything at present.

Goering has an estate in East Prussia. Up to the time of going to press.

Hitler has revealed the existence of a Balkan wall. His generals are now openly discussing how to prevent him from giving away any further hints of Germany's vulnerability.



If I May Say So

"... though there was no ceremonial and landing craft went on unloading tanks, munitions, and me on to the crowded beaches."—*Northern paper.*

Many commercial concerns are now booking orders for post-war delivery. Vacuum-cleaner salesmen have made the most of the idea, and are going all out in the hope of selling vacuum-cleaners to people for the period when they won't want one.

Chance Encounter

HE said that he had dreamed a dream last night

Amid the snatches of uneasy slumber
Of a great palace filled with glittering light,
All glass it was—in sections without number.
(I do not think that he was feeling well
But suffering from shock and mild abrasions,
I listened to the tale he had to tell
As fellow bus-fares must on these occasions.)

Lovely, he said it was—all minarets
And domes and spires and cupolas and gables,
Glass were the knives and forks and dinner sets
And glass the flowers and glass the chairs and tables
And all the ornaments were moulded glass
German, Venetian, stuff—he spoke with feeling—
Goblets and bowls and beakers, genuine class
And chandeliers hung down from every ceiling.

No, there was never such a place on earth
Built for an ancient King benign or callous
Beside it Xanadu was nothing worth
Nor, as you might say, was the Crystal Palace—
Could I oblige him with a light?—The halls
Were crammed with coloured glass in labelled cases
And shining mirrors fastened to the walls
Reflected everybody's beastly faces.

It stood upon an island gay with flowers
A little island—there were lawns and cedars
And only falling petals marked the hours
And in that place were all the Nazi leaders;
There was no hope of issuing therefrom
And someone cried "Look sharp, and make it
snappy!"

"And I," he said, "I was a flying bomb
Loaded with dynamite. And *was* I happy!"

EVOE.

Humour

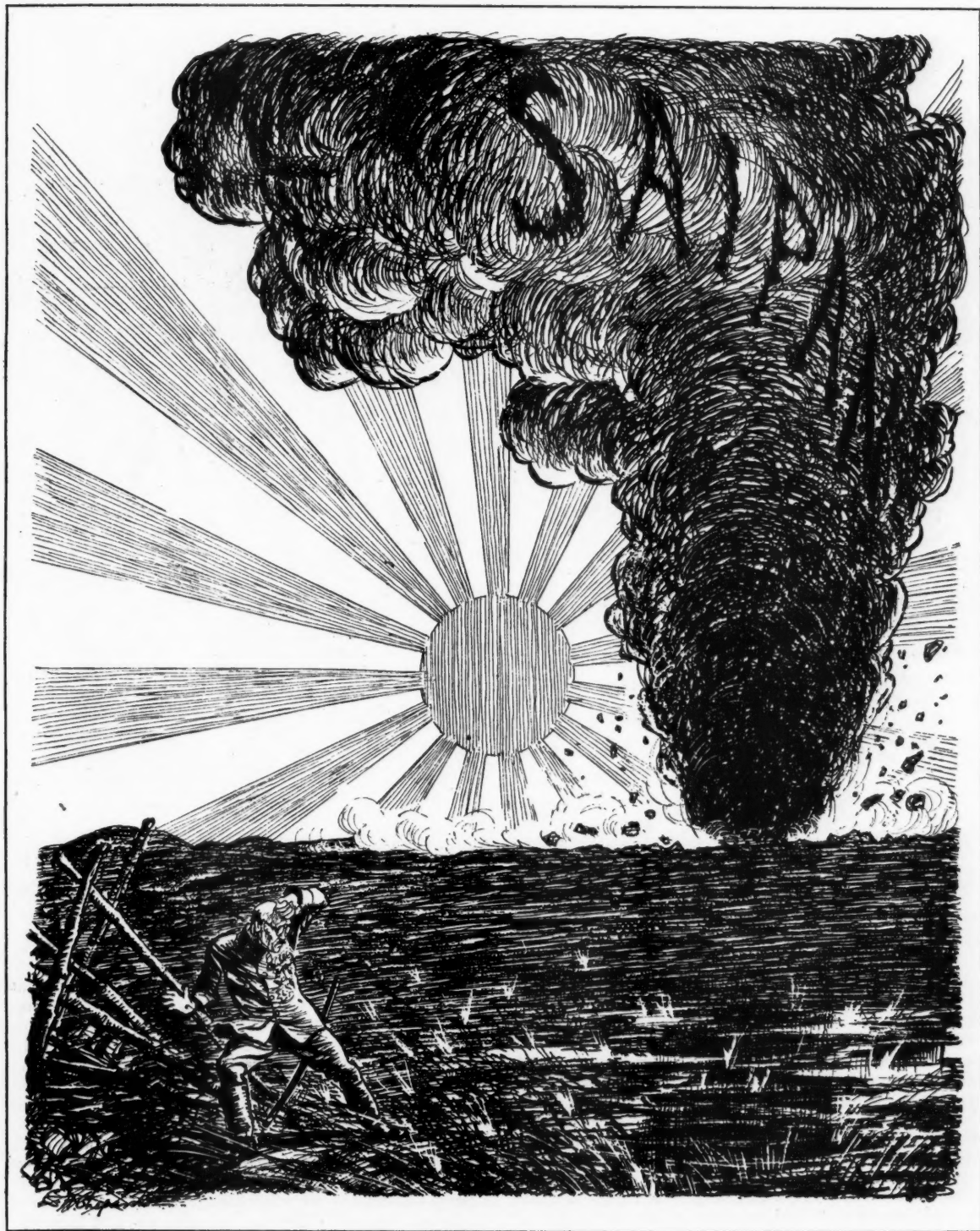
IT is awfully significant of something that definers have never been able to define what is meant by what the people who ask them call a sense of humour. It is even more significant that people should have to ask this sort of thing so often. Sociologists think it is because human nature needs an occasional bolstering up with the idea that man is an inexplicable creature, and that as progress gets further and further under way this remains the surest method of getting it. Without, therefore, attempting to explain what we mean by humour, I propose to say a few words about what we get by having it all over the place.

I do not, I think, need to point out that everyone has a sense of humour, just as, and no more than, everyone has

a sensitive skin. Nevertheless, with the spread of sophistication we quite often get people boasting about not having a sense of humour. Such people are assigned by their fellows to a definite sub-division of the human race. They are not expected to laugh at anything they do not laugh at, but they *are* expected, because it is just the sort of thing they would do, to laugh like mad if anyone slips on a banana-skin, this being, as is well known, the test of humour. No one, by the way, is quite sure how this idea arose, because even in the old banana days no one ever actually saw anyone slipping on a banana-skin. Psychologists trace it back to the comic papers people read when they are young, but this does not tell us much more than that comic artists, determined to start their public on the right road, have always realized that to recognize slipping on banana-skins as funny is part of life's equipment. They know this because they too learnt it from comic papers when they were young. Psychologists can find no better explanation for it all than that slipping on a banana-skin is probably nice to draw, because of the imaginary banana-skins. As for sitting on hats, which ranks only second to banana-skins in the comic papers, all I want to say is that there is a lot of woolly thinking here. People do not sit on their own hats. They sit on other people's in trains; or, rather, they circle a few inches above the hat, hypnotising the rest of the compartment, until they themselves notice the hat and remove it. That is all there is to it, beyond that very slight isolation of the person who nearly sat on the hat from the rest of the compartment for the next half-minute. This, psychologists say, is again due to the influence of the comic papers; the public is seeing such people as Art rather than Life.

While I am dealing with people in train-compartments I must mention those reading something funny in the presence of strangers; train-compartments being about the best place they have to do it in. There are two ways of reading something funny in a train. One is to read it in the ordinary way, by bringing the eyes along one line and starting again at the next. The other is to give, intermittently, a reverse sniff, each time readjusting the grip on the book or magazine. In this way only can other people be made to realize that something funny is being read by the right person. Even so it does not help anyone much, because the reaction of people to anything funny they are not themselves reading is a sudden wild shrinking, followed by a furtive determination to get at any rate the name of the book or story or article or whatever is causing the trouble. If it is a funny picture, of course, the people round it have a fair chance of seeing for themselves, even if they are the wrong way round. It is interesting that a picture seen upside-down can never do more for itself than look as if it might be awfully funny the right way up, while the caption suffers the fate of anything read upside-down by seeming to be shouting at someone who is not deaf but just can't hear a word.

People who read funny books or magazines in the home circle are much less trouble. They are a bit apt to thrust something under someone's nose and wait for the reaction, which they do by concentrating a battery of expectation on the other person's face. Also those who read a funny book before the rest of the household gets it are apt to appoint themselves its guardian, expecting the credit from anyone else who reads it, but this applies to all books, psychologists tell us. To go back to train-compartments once more, there is nothing queerer for the public than to hear someone reading a joke aloud to some friend. What is excessively queer is that the joke should be funny; I mean, that it can be dissociated from the person reading it and stand on its own feet. There is, as I must have told my readers



TOO MUCH FOR TOJO

[The Japanese Government has resigned owing to the Emperor Hirohito's "concern" about the loss of Saipan.]



"German planeless pilots they are, lady."

before, a very strong belief among everyone that everyone else lives according to a set of incomprehensible laws and values; in other words, is different. (Psychologists say they see how we get this idea; after all, all people *look* different from us. Still, they add, that is no excuse.) Because of this idea that all other people look different from people, it is very difficult for people to overhear two strangers undergoing any exchange of wit without being stunned at such brilliance, as well as knowing they could do better themselves.

Wit, the philosophers tell us, is not the same as humour. Wit is wittier than humour, while humour is more humorous than wit. Mankind is ready to accept this distinction, to save trouble, but it has its own definition, which is that a sense of humour is something everyone has, while wit, a subtler quality, is something plenty of other people do *not* have. To prove this, they point out that plenty of other people never say witty things; forgetting that half the witty things they themselves say are not so much said as conjured up later when they are alone and brushing their

hair, or reaching behind the sofa for a paper-clip, or eating up the stale buns—occasions when wit is of little use to them; while the other half, the half they say out loud at the time, are, as likely as not, not heard properly. Nevertheless every now and then these people get a considerable round of applause, which makes them feel pretty silly at the time and pretty good afterwards; there being nothing better for the self-esteem in retrospect than to have said the right thing at the right moment. It gives them an odd feeling of having contributed to the world something which the world has never had contributed to it before, they can't think why, though they can really. Psychologists say that we have only to contrast this feeling with the feeling of people who have actually managed to sit on their own hat to see the real difference between wit and humour; because the only odd feeling people sitting on their own hats get is the odd feeling that they are contributing nothing whatever to the world, but are simply giving it another chance of seeing what it has often seen before, if only in the comic papers.

Allies

LAST winter we had a non-English-speaking battalion attached to our brigade. They were good chaps and set us a high standard of military efficiency to live up to—but there *was* the language difficulty. Our Brigade Intelligence Officer's hair nearly went grey with telephoning.

One of his less enviable tasks is to get up at 0530 hrs. each morning and telephone the meteorological report (alias weather forecast and alias a good many much ruder names) to the battalions under our command. The battalions don't really want to be bothered at 0530 with facts they can see for themselves, *e.g.*, that there is "ten-tenths cloud at nought feet," and that what they are pleased to call "wintry precipitation" will probably continue. Nor are they any better pleased when they are told that "an improvement may be expected later." Whatever expectations divisional or brigade H.Q. may still have on the subject, the fighting troops have long since ceased to share them.

To return to our friends. They had a British Liaison Officer with them who spoke their language, but he (not unnaturally) laid down the principle that he was ready *either* to be up most of every night translating and transmitting the daily situation report, *or* to get up at 0530 every morning, but he couldn't do both. Being a man who loved his dinner and the local wine, he normally preferred the evening shift.

And so this was the sort of thing that our I.O. had to cope with each morning once our own Signals operators had got him through to the far exchange.

"Ye—es?" they answer.

"Adjutant, please," rather brusquely from our I.O. He is conscientious rather than good-tempered about this early-morning business.

"Ye—es?"

"Is that the Adjutant?"

"Speak, please."

As this last remark comes from a different voice our I.O. assumes it is an invitation to continue. So away he goes, at dictation speed, spelling out the rather tricky words like nimbus and cumuloform, and at each pause he gets the same O.K.: "Speak, please." In five minutes he has finished and he sits back panting.

"Who you want, please?" says the voice, and our I.O. realizes that for the whole time he has been holding the operator in a one-sided and fruitless conversation.

"The Adjutant, please," he answers in a tone of resigned fury.

"Speak, please?" says the operator. At all costs this must be stopped.

He is about to be hard-hearted and to demand that the British I.O. shall be dragged from his sleeping-bag to the phone, when he decides to play one last card.

"Intelligence Officer, please." Even if they haven't an adjutant, they must have some sort of an I.O. It works.

After a short and shivering pause comes a ringing tone like that of a regular N.C.O. explaining his functions as No. 1 on the Bren Gun at a demonstration:

"I am ze Intelligence Offeeceer!"

"Ah, good! Good morning to you! May I give you the weather forecast?"

"Ye—es. But I am sorry that eet comes so late!"

The boldness of this counter-attack takes our representative's breath away, and before he can come back with a snappy rejoinder

(a) that he had started trying to contact them well before 0530,

(b) that the operator shouldn't have said he was the Adjutant when he wasn't, etc., etc.,

the voice goes on reproachfully: "You should have had eet before. Eet must not occur again."

This nettles our I.O. Even if he is in the wrong it isn't for a subordinate

"THEY ALSO SERVE"

THEY are brave, these people who, behind the scenes, whether at home or in the factories, go quietly about their essential tasks. Even when they are bombed and lose their homes and cherished possessions, their grateful appreciation of the help given them through the PUNCH COMFORTS FUND proclaims the spirit which cannot be broken.

The privilege of service to them is extended to you. If you have helped us with contributions before will you please help us again? If this is your first introduction to the Fund will you please become a subscriber? Donations will be gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940

I.O. to tell him where he gets off, but before he can say so the relentless voice goes on:

"Last night-before we had patrols. We found one offeeceer and tree men and shot them in the stomach with a tommy gun and overflow. They were dead. We took tree prisoners in a house but more enemy came and we had to leave them. As we were leaving, a grenade fell in the room where they were. I do not think they live. That is all."

It gradually dawns on our I.O.'s slightly dazed brain that he is the recipient not of a rebuke followed up by ill-timed gossip, but of an apology followed by an overdue patrol report. With some relief he realizes that, instead of having to counter an unexpected Allied offensive, all he has to do is to accept gracefully a handsome apology. This done, and the patrol report having been repeated at dictation speed and taken down, he returns to the offensive.

"May I give you the met. report now?"

"There are no troops in PETITORO," comes the rather surprising reply.

"I said 'May I give you the MET. REPORT for this morning?'"

"There are no troops in PETITORO."

"The WEATHER FORECAST!"

"There are no troops there, neither."

Very slowly this time—

"I do not think that you heard quite what I said. May I dictate to you the daily meteorological report—that is to say, the weather forecast for to-day?"

"No. I do not think so."

There they left it. It was becoming too like the Responses. After all, the battalions could see the wintry precipitation as well as our I.O. could, and, as he had only pyjamas on under his greatcoat and they were probably fully dressed, the odds were heavily against him.

But the unexplained mystery is this. Half an hour later he had to ring them up again with a far more complicated message about arrangements for the visit of an Ensa party. He was answered in limited but perfectly intelligent and intelligible English.

"Any girls?" inquired the voice.

"Yes, I believe so—a singer and three danseuses."

"Oh, goody-goody!" said the voice, and rang off.

Personally I suspect one of our own operators.

Lady Addle's Domestic Front

Bengers, Herts, 1944

MY DEAR, DEAR READERS, —Perhaps the social revolution which we of the old school have witnessed during the past thirty years is exemplified in luncheon more than in any other function of Society. We have seen our houses turned into flats, even the servants' bedrooms commanding a vast price and frequented for the first time by the gentry, we have been forced by super-tax to allow our peers to write for the newspapers and our peeresses to advertise face cream, and for luncheon, one of the most elegant meals of the day, where breeding should count above everything, we have so far deteriorated that only last week I saw a dowager marchioness, in a snack-bar, and even before the war a terrible innovation called a fork luncheon was beginning to appear in the ranks of the *beau monde*.

Indeed, these latter sometimes constituted a positive danger, as I know from Addle, who was not used to such things and heartily disliked them, and who once put his fork right through the hand of an Italian contessa (she had a very dark skin), thinking it was a cold quail. It quite spoilt his lunch, as he didn't feel like eating the real quail afterwards, and he vowed that he would never go to such an unappetising meal again.

Most serious of all, however, seems to me to be the change in Sunday lunch, which was once the core of family life, the aftermath of mattins, where "the roast beef of Old England" provided weekly testimony to our country's greatness. What a hive of industry the house would be beforehand too! The gardener would have kept back his best fruit and vegetables for Sunday, the cook and kitchen staff would be about twice as busy as on ordinary days, the butler and footmen, often supplemented by other men-servants in spare uniforms, would be at their smartest, for if anything went wrong with the lunch woe betide them! My father, indeed, used to say that no gentleman was ever in a good temper for Sunday lunch, and instanced his own father,* who used regularly to give one of the servants notice on Sunday in consequence of some shortcoming, either real or imaginary, in the lunch routine. In fact there is a story of him, when he was getting on in life, having turned on his wife in

the middle of the night, after some Sunday lunch had particularly upset him, and said to her "You can go. You are lazy, incompetent and getting past your work," which so offended Lady Coot that she removed herself to her boudoir for the remainder of the night.

Nowadays all is changed. The glory of Sunday lunch has departed. Families still have their joints, it is true, but the meal is beginning to be an easy, somewhat slap-dash affair without any special meaning. People—even before the war—had begun to spare their servants. It is sad indeed to think how lax we have grown, as a country, in the keeping of our Sabbath.

Other things have departed too, mainly due of course to the war. The cosy lunch-party of ten or a dozen guests, with half as many courses, has completely disappeared. How I used to enjoy these, especially if the party were confined to my own sex and I could therefore take Margaret with an easy mind, instead of having to keep

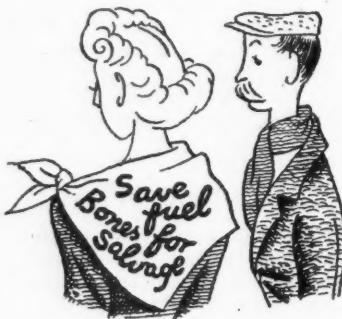
one eye on her all through lunch to see if the two men placed each side of her were talking to her or not! Usually they would last till the fish course, sometimes to the meat, rarely beyond. Then I would watch first one and then the other turn away and spend the rest of the time conversing with his other neighbour, so that the second half of *my* lunch would have to be spent in making remarks across the table in order to redirect their attention to my daughter. I grew quite adept at this, and several times reopened the conversation and observed with joy that it lasted right through to the end of lunch; but afterwards, in the drawing-room, they would only drift away somehow, and I would feel that all my labour had been in vain.

Although such functions as these must of necessity be restricted in these hard days, yet all the same, by those who still maintain a high standard, a lot can be achieved to-day—as witness my clever sister Mipsie, who contrived to give the most wonderful lunch-party of eighteen not long ago, though with her usual high sense of duty she did not feel justified in doing this in war-time except for a charity, so the lunch was in aid of a fire-watchers' dance club in which she was particularly interested.

In case any of my readers want to raise money for a like good cause I will tell them how she did this.

First, she telephoned or wrote to her many friends, asking them to send her ingredients for the lunch. They responded splendidly, as people always do with her, sending her chickens, salmon, asparagus, melons, etc. An exquisite meal was then prepared, to which she invited her smartest friends, charging them only £1 ls. a head, in order to cover the fee of a very attractive young American singer whom she was anxious to support. (She is so endlessly kind.) Before he sang, however, Mipsie made a touching appeal for the charity, and then took off her own mink hat, like any organ-grinder, and passed it round. Of course £5 and £10 notes showered into it, so that she was easily able to pay for the chef and the wines; and the delightful lunch, therefore, did not cost either her or the charity one penny piece. What it is to be a genius!

M. D.



DOUGLAS
—LOW—

Our Suggestion to the Weather
"WHY NOT KEEP BRIGHT & ATTRACTIVE
ALL SUMMER"—Advt.

* 12th Earl Coot



Special Dispatch

(With apologies to the British Broadcasting Corporation)

HELLO, B.B.C.—This is Larry Pinfold, your financial reporter, calling from Bretton Woods, New Hampshire.

I am speaking from the roof of the recording-car on a hillside overlooking the scene of the United Nations Monetary and Economic Conference. It's a terrific sight. As far as the eye can reach, in every direction, there is nothing but dense woodland. The trees—oak, ash, beech, birch, elm, fir and maple—stand as quiet as roof-spotters. There are literally hundreds of them—unseeing spectators of the grim struggle that is going on somewhere down there in the valley. They seem to have come here from miles around.

The weather is improving and is not likely to hold up machinations. Earlier a strong on-shore wind threatened to fluster the files, but paper-weights were brought up at an incredible speed by willing under-secretaries and the position was restored.

Although Bretton Woods is sparsely inhabited people have not, for the past week, known where to put themselves for excitement. They realize that great decisions are imminent and sit with their radios tuned in for news of the Normandy beachhead and the Russian offensive. The atmosphere, unlike the domestic lighting system here, is electric.

I spent to-day interviewing delegates to the conference. Mr. Galfont Duquesne, a member of one of the committees into which the various commissions which make up the conference have been divided, was out and about at a very early hour. "Yes," he said, "we are quietly confident. We are not yet out of the woods, but I think we

can say that our committee will concentrate on ways to use silver as an international monetary stabilizer"—and he added, with an infectious smile, "You may quote me there."

Mr. Fred Pendlebury, a member of the British mission, was carrying a very bulky portfolio when I met him on a woodland footpath. He looked fit, bronzed and happy. "This is not going to be a picnic," he said rather pointedly.

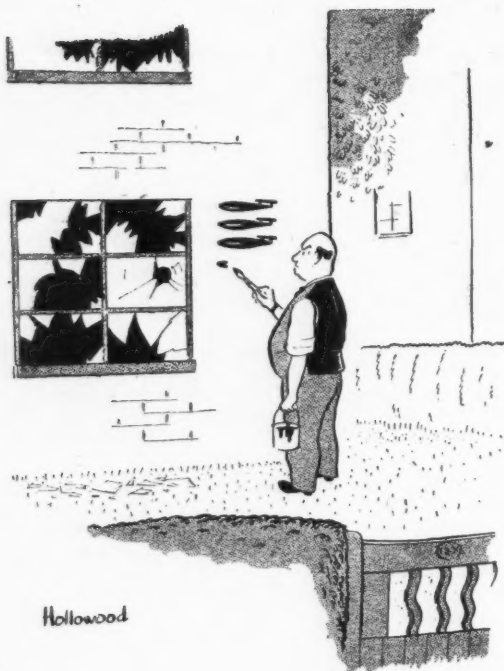
Señor Eduardo Goprez, a member of the Mexican delegation, was also looking bronzed. He told me that he and his colleagues were being paid in Mexican dollars printed in Mexico. The British delegates, he said, were being paid in English pounds printed in England. Without in any way pretending to understand the niceties of all these currency problems, the idea sounded all right to me, and I said so.

After nightfall, when the trees have shed their leaves and the myriads of flowers have closed their petals, the delegates push aside their memoranda and give themselves up to recreation. The paraffin lamps are lit and the log-cabins begin to hum with activity.

The dice roll out and the game is on. Stakes are high. I understand that Mr. Morgenthau had a very thrilling session last night. At one time, I am told, he held the British fiduciary issue, the Belgian bullion reserve and the French Exchange Equalization Fund. Fortunately Lord Keynes shot a double-six at the right moment and stabilized what had threatened to become a very dirty situation.

Well, folks, this is Larry Pinfold signing off. G'night everybody—and now I'll return you to the studio.





The Phoney Phleet

L—H.M.S. "Relic"

THE *Relic's* captain, Captain Nunn,
Would simply NOT decentralize
Or delegate or deputize.
He had no faith in anyone.
Whichever way a job was done
He wanted it done otherwise.

In everything, from scrubbing decks
To painting barnacles, he'd try
To have a finger in the pie,
Until the crew were moral wrecks.
De minimis non curat lex
Was NOT the fellow's battle-cry.

He'd sometimes drink the ratings' rum
Because the ratings' way, he said,
Was inefficient and ill-bred.
And when they had some leave to come
He'd even get *more* meddlesome
And go on leave himself instead.

The climax came at last. One day
Nunn visited the galley where
The cooks were grouting cream éclairs.
He squeezed one but it wouldn't play,
It folded and it stayed that way.
"A pump!" he cried. "These things need air!"

The Warrant Cook intoned a charm
Designed to make Nunn writhe and skip
And give his great-grandchildren gyp—
And then, before he did him harm,
Went up on deck. To his alarm
He saw a German battleship.

But *Relic* didn't fire a shot.
The crew sat silent and inert
As anyone could bet his shirt
That *anything* he did would not
Appeal to Captain Nunn; so what?
Then Fritz began to shoot. It hurt.

The Warrant Cook addressed the hands
Exhorting them to sink the Huns.
"I promise, when you fire the guns,
No matter *where* the salvo lands,
For once you'll have no reprimands—
Your captain's occupied with buns."

Revitalized by this reprieve
The sailors functioned on their own.
The enemy was overthrown
And everybody went on leave.
Which shows what people can achieve
If only they are left alone.

There are some fundamental things
That Whitehall cannot overlook,
And thus while Nunn was made a cook
The Warrant Cook received four rings.
Which demonstrates that Justice brings
Reward to Virtue, Sin to Book.

Table-Talk of Amos Intolerable

VI

AMOS has long had a habit of trotting out small items of superficially bizarre information about well-known characters of the past and present, items that sound as if he must have made them up, but for which he can always, if challenged (and he always hopes for and welcomes the challenge), quote some authority. As a rule he takes care to use each one only once in a particular circle, regarding it ever afterwards as (in that circle) the equivalent of a used match; but occasionally he forgets. On one occasion, for instance, when he announced loudly a fact he had discovered in *Chambers's Encyclopædia*—

"Edgar Allan Poe was once a sergeant-major," he was affronted to find that it aroused only the comment "Yes, I know." Blowing out his cheeks, he immediately regrouped his forces, shortened his line and launched his second wave of attack—

"Did you know Bertrand Russell was descended from the god Thor?"

He had extracted this, he afterwards told us, from the same mine. It went over better.

* * * * *

A stout rosy man of exceedingly complacent appearance had been sitting with us for some time, according none of Amos's remarks ~~more~~ than a slight condescending smile,



"We might as well let Miss Daniels have a holiday. I'm getting tired of all these hints."

and Amos at last grew dissatisfied with his reactions. He leaned forward over the table, assumed an air of terrifying bonhomie and asked in his chattiest tone "Can I sell you any smug assurance?"

Of course he ought to have foreseen what would happen. The man failed to notice the adjective, replied mildly, "No, thanks," and several times afterwards seriously warned people against Amos as an insurance bore.

"A friend of mine, who had a pet sparrow that lived to be seventy-eight and towards the end appeared to feel its age," Amos once thunderstruck everybody by remarking, "used to occupy such leisure as the bird allowed him by making up clues for words in non-existent crossword puzzles."

"Is that so?" we said, and Amos replied "Yes. One, I remember, ran 'If you're —'" (Amos drew a line in the air with his finger to indicate the blank) "'call me Curly, call me Curly, mother dear.'"

Somebody suggested that the answer was "QUAKING" and this of course was right, but for some moments a sense of business unfinished troubled the company. At length somebody else inquired "What was your friend's name?"

Amos instantly replied "Hamilear Buretter," cleared his throat loudly, and went out. No one afterwards, to my knowledge, ever reopened the subject, and the episode has always remained in my mind as an example of singular inconclusiveness.

He himself, for that matter, has always had a fondness for puzzles of a certain kind. I remember one time when he would hardly allow even the ordering of drinks before producing the curiosity that was occupying his thoughts: "What exceedingly popular bit of rhymed verse," he began

slowly and distinctly, breathing through clenched teeth and dilating his nostrils as he looked round, "begins with two lines that end with the same word, the same word, mark you, and that yet *don't* rhyme or exhibit the slightest assuance?"

Nobody knew, and at last he told us it was *If*. The announcement was greeted with tepid enthusiasm; one man present said "So what?" and another said "Devised by Harry S. Pepper." Amos looked as if he would never take any trouble with our education again.

He would sometimes go to enormous pains to achieve a small momentary effect. (In this connection I may mention a quality in which he was proud, and assiduous, to resemble Confucius: he would not discuss prodigies or sensational news. At least he made a great point of saying he wouldn't at times when there was none to discuss. "Big things," I have often heard him say, "please little minds.") Once he told us a long, involved and boring story about a missionary in Central Africa. There was little in the story except for various flat details of occurrences in the school the missionary was alleged to have run, and the whole thing (lasting a quarter of an hour) was obviously narrated for the sole purpose of leading up to four or five words at the end. After describing how he had said good-bye to the missionary Amos paused, and then asked impressively: "And do you know what happened to the missionary's small black pupils?"

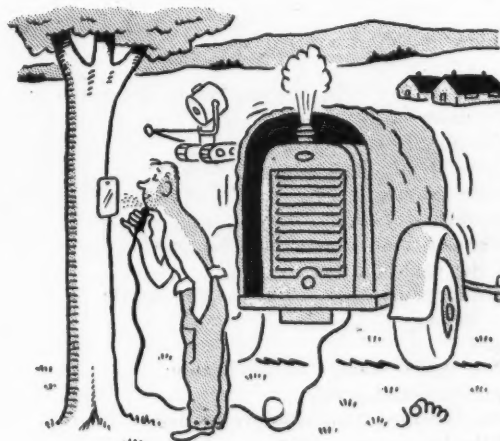
We said No. Amos leaned forward, raised a finger and announced in a hoarse tone "They contracted to pin-points."

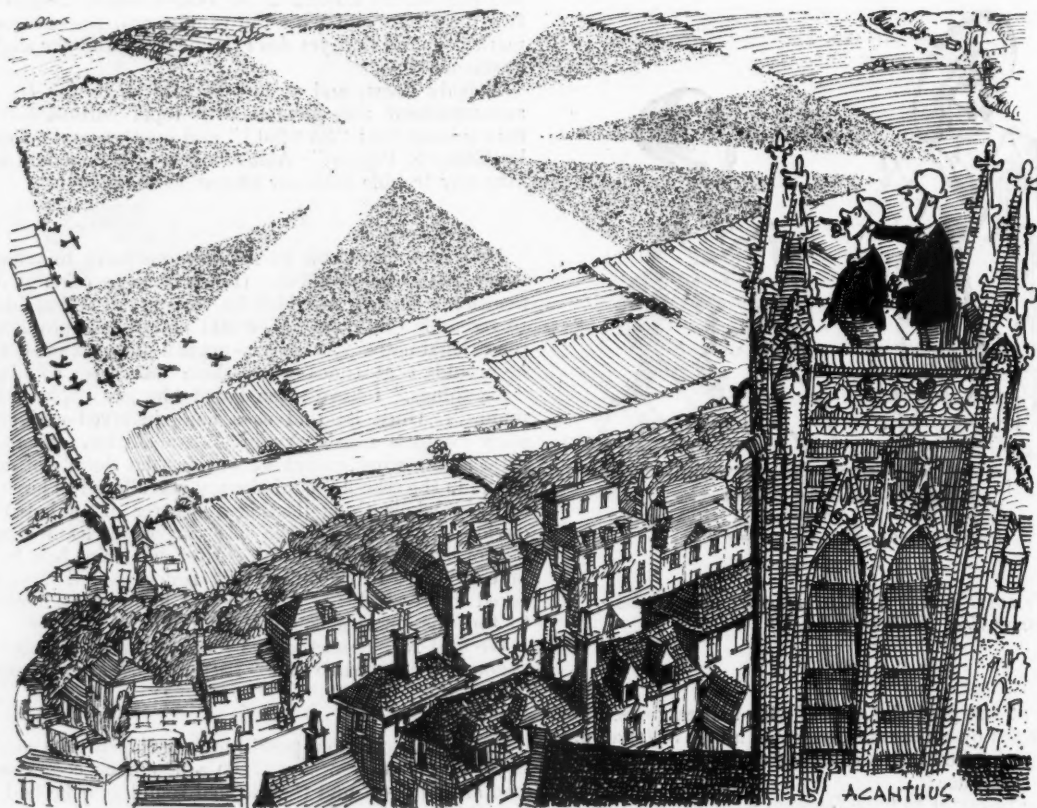
In a discussion about publishing one elderly man coughed importantly, announced "When a new book comes out, I read an old one," and then looked round as if he had said something good.

Amos's comment was "My word, you must be busy." R. M.

Well Caught, Sir!

"Major Mills fielded smartly for the winners at long leg, and also made a fine catch after running about 30 years." Hampshire paper.





"It's an American aerodrome, but I don't think they actually built it."

Lights

THERE will be light again—lights!
The sombre-cloaked monk-hooded nights
Will have gone—there will be light. . . .

Lights in the streets, in the squares, in the
alley-ways,
Lights on the hills, on the moors, down the
valley ways;
Wheeling lights from the sea,
Lights of tall ships moving shadowily
Under safe stars;
Headlights of motor-cars
Stripping the darkness, glittering chain
Of the vanishing train
Threading its way through the needle of
night.

Light!
River lights—haunts of old Thames
Twinkling with gems
From windows flung wide to the flight
Of the hay-scented night.

Far lights and near lights,
Harbour lights, pier lights,
Dear lights
Of Dover, of London. Big Ben
Shining again,
Theatre-land blazing with fame's
Celestial names,
Dazzle from shop-fronts, shimmering mirrors
Of ebon-black traffic-lanes shorn of their terrors,
Neon signs flashing, fading and flashing,
Traffic-lights splashing
Red and green pennons on rain-glassy streets,
Brightly-lit buses, commercial conceits
Printed in fire on the hoardings of night.
Light!
Light from great reservoirs steadily flowing—
The London once more of our knowing,
Golden and glowing. . . .

One of these nights
There will be light again—lights!



THE LAST DITCH

“ . . . For mine own good
All causes shall give way; I am in blood
Stepp’d in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o’er.”—*Macbeth, Act III, Sc. 4*

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, July 18th.—House of Lords: Affecting Moments.

House of Commons: Unexpected Debate Arises.

Wednesday, July 19th.—House of Commons: Housing.

Thursday, July 20th.—House of Commons: The Holidays Approach.

Tuesday, July 18th.—Students of these Impressions are familiar with the fact that, as the financial demands of the Government grow, the critical faculty of the House of Commons shrinks. So that as demand for one thousand million pounds succeeds demand for one thousand million pounds, M.P.s have less and less to say, Ministers are more and more reluctant to go into details.

Until to-day. Sir JOHN ANDERSON, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, stepped to the Table, spoke a few words, mentioned that we were "steadily" spending £13,250,000 a day on the war, added the comforting information that this new demand would see the Government through to about the end of October—and left it at that. Except that, when this vote had been used up, he would ask for another.

Mr. PETHICK-LAWRENCE, for the Labour Party, got up and (as he has done for years) agreed that the money should be given. And that, normally, is that. Sir JOHN ANDERSON began to gather up his papers, his advisers put their notebooks in their pockets, prepared to depart.

But this day was different. Somebody actually wanted to know how the money was being spent, others wanted an assurance that the "efficient prosecution of the war"—one of the reasons given in the official resolution for the demand for cash—*was* efficient.

This, indeed, was revolutionary. Sir JOHN looked stern, and unpacked his papers. The advisers frowned and got out their notebooks again. But the critics had the determined look of pioneers, and they pressed their objections. Indeed, they pressed for hours on end, and got on to all sorts of topics—for there are few human activities, inactivities, or even thoughts which do not come under so all-embracing a vote.

Some Members did not think the conduct of the war was, perfect,

particularly the insistence on "unconditional surrender" from Germany, and this Ministers thought most improper. One or two even said stern things about the Prime Minister himself, and this brought that faithful Ministerial watchdog, Mr. BEVERLEY BAXTER, to his feet.

Fixing the Opposition M.P.s with a freezing gaze, he accused them of "harassing" the Prime Minister. Forgetting the passage of the years, he borrowed (without acknowledgment) a highly-successful quip used by the late Lord BIRKENHEAD about two venerable peers, and dubbed Mr. DICK STOKES and Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN "The Dolly Sisters." Before anyone had a chance to work out this deep (if anachronistic) piece of wit, he added that the two accused had been "un-

who does not much like Socialists, pointed out that already most of our freedom had gone, we were pushed about by all sorts of officials, had to do or were not permitted to do most of the things we disliked and liked respectively, and asked wonderingly what further instalment of Socialism there remained to bring in!

This went very well with most of the House, but the Labour critics made derogatory noises. Mr. BEVAN, speaking as an expert, expressed the view that Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, the Foreign Secretary, in replying to a debate, never answered anybody but "fobbed off the House with verbal ambiguities."

Nobody seemed any too clear what this meant, but soon afterwards the money Sir JOHN ANDERSON had asked for was granted—without a division or any ambiguity.

Mr. "ROB" HUDSON, the Minister of Agriculture, in a brief subsequent debate on agriculture, mentioned "pure-bred boars" as being highly-desirable for the production of good pork. Someone asked whether these "pure-bred boars" were the raw material of our war-time sausages, but no satisfactory information was forthcoming on this abstruse point.

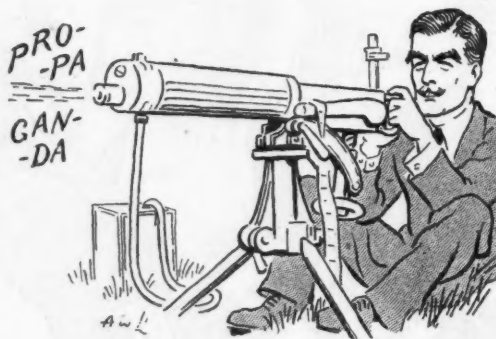
There were some questions about the shortage of alarm clocks, and Members made it clear that the absence of alarms was causing despondency among those who sleep soundly and must rise betimes. But apparently all one has to do is to fill in a form—and then find a shop that has a clock for sale.

Mr. DALTON, President of the Board of Trade, offered the fullest facilities for the former operation, none at all for the latter.

Cross-examined by Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS, Mr. DALTON (with astonishment at such abysmal ignorance in his every tone) explained that the mystic initials "C.P." in an official document meant "Ceiling Prices." He didn't say "Of course!" but evidently meant it.

Up in the House of Peers, there was an atmosphere of "parting is such sweet sorrow." They were saying farewell to the Education Bill, and right emotional they were about it. It was understandable, for the Bill had been with them for so long that the old place won't seem the same without it. Sort of affectionate evacuee from the Commons.

Mr. "RAB" BUTLER, the Minister of Education, sitting on the steps of the



"It is necessary that we should not only direct bullets at the enemy's body, but direct ideas at the enemy's brain."—Mr. Aneurin Bevan.

"Our propaganda to enemy countries has not been by any means unsuccessful."—Mr. Eden.

generous, unkind and even venomous." The two "Sisters" appeared unmoved. Mr. BAXTER seemed surprised that they still lived. After that the party got rough.

Mr. RHYS DAVIES referred to Mr. BEVAN's speech as "vitriol and vinegar," and Mr. FRANK BOWLES, who has abandoned his membership of the Home Guard so that he may concentrate all his youthful energies and military skill on verbal guerrilla attacks on the Government, made a speech that got him into trouble with his Party-colleague, Mr. VALENTINE MCENTEE, who, at seventy-three, remains an active roof-climbing member of the Parliamentary Home Guard. Sir PERCY HARRIS, the Liberal Chief Whip, also "went for" Mr. BOWLES, who apparently wanted "more Socialism" as a contribution to winning the war.

At this, Mr. AUSTIN HOPKINSON,



"Now remember, no highbrow stuff—to-day's programme is for the Forces."

Throne, seemed to be deeply moved by the tributes to his child, now about to go out into the Great Big World.

Lord MOTTISTONE, whose colloquialisms sometimes astonish their Lordships, wagged a minatory finger and warned the Bill not to "come it over" local authorities. Lord SELBORNE, who had been its foster-father in the Upper House, made a long speech in which he wished it everything a foster-father should wish a good little boy, and even used the expression "Ere we say farewell," in the best "My-boy-you-are-going-into-a-Great-Adventure" vein.

The Archbishop of Canterbury added a few well-chosen words of advice, and Education Bill (if the affectionate diminutive is permissible in this emotional atmosphere) went his way. And so did Mr. BUTLER.

Wednesday, July 19th.—Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS showed a penetrating insight into human (and particularly Ministerial) nature when he mildly inquired—in *re* prefabricated houses—what name they would be given (a) if they were popular, and (b) if they were unpopular. Mr. ATTLEE wouldn't guess.

Mr. RUPERT DE LA BERE, who has been strangely silent of late, returned

to the fray to-day, and uttered (to the general refreshment and delight) his old war-cry: "Is not the entire matter *very* unsatisfactory?" He added, as if to clinch the matter, that it was also "*thoroughly*" unsatisfactory.

Then the House went on to talk about housing, with Mr. HENRY WILLINK, the Minister of Health, in charge. Usually when one says that *the House* went on to talk about something, one means that one Member at a time did so, but this time it was different.

Most of the time the Minister was speaking there was a running fire of "barracking" and heckling, and Mr. WILLINK, fighter that he is (if good-tempered and urbane withal), found himself involved in many wordy battles.

And fighter that he is, he kept his face towards the enemy, with the result that Mr. Speaker once had to intervene rather plaintively with the remark that the Chair would like to hear him, and found some difficulty in doing so as his back was turned.

But t'battle (in the immortal words of the Dook, as recorded by Private Samuel Small), havin' commenced, went on all day. Members did not think the programme of houses—some

300,000 in the first few years after the war—was good enough, or big enough, or showed enough appreciation of the magnitude and fitness of things.

And they said so in all sorts of tones and settings, but in the end passed the Second Reading of the Bill which will enable the Minister of Health to do his best. And the best of "Happy Harry" WILLINK can be very good.

Thursday, July 20th.—Mr. EDEN announced that the House would shortly take about seven weeks' holiday, and this was received with mixed feelings by Members who thought this hardly "the thing" in the midst of all-out war effort. Mr. SHINWELL, in fact, announced that when the time came formally to fix the holiday he would move an abbreviating amendment.

He did not like the idea of retiring to the provinces while London was under fire from the flying bombs. And his sentiments were cheered.

Glamour Note

"When you want to make your eyes soulful and full of expression, spread a very thin film of vaseline over the lids."

Woman and Beauty.



"Ah, the fish doesn't smell bad!"

Little Talks

CAN I come in?
Of course. How can I stop you?
It is Happy Landing, is it not—the famous racehorse?

I have always understood that my name was plainly exhibited outside the stall. Can't you read?

I'm sorry. But your plans change so rapidly I couldn't be sure. I thought it might be—However—

What is all this about?

May I ask if it is really true you're going to run for the St. Leger?

Well, I'm entered. Why not?

It's very good news. But when you called on me some weeks ago I understood you to say you were somewhat sick of racing. In fact, I thought you

said you were going to join up. In the Intelligence.

Well, so I did. At least I joined up. But I got no further. The Red Tape was simply unbelievable.

Too bad.

My trainer refused to fill up any of the forms about my capacity, and I don't know any attorneys, commissioners of oaths, or ministers of religion. They sent me to a riding-school for a disciplinary course and there, of course, I raised hell. I threw the chief instructor through the glass roof.

Naughty.

I know. They said I had no O.L.Q. whatever.

O.L.Q.?

Officer-like Qualities. And I looked twice at a training-mare. I got no marks at all for O.L.Q. So they sent me to a trick-cyclist.

A what?

I don't think that's quite the right word. A bike—a sike—

Psychiatrist.

That's it. He put up words on the wall and gave me fifteen seconds to write down my reactions.

What sort of words?

Oh, words like Mother, Blood, Race, Complex, Bayonet. I gave all the wrong answers.

What did you say about "RACE"?

I put down "A damn bore. Borealis." The right answer, it seems, was "British. Best in the world." But it was Complex that finished me. I put down "Complex. Inferiority. Psycho-analysis. Damn nonsense." The trick-cyclist was furious. He said it showed I was quite unfitted for an Intelligence job, and sent me back to barracks.

What happened next?

Well, I did three weeks pulling a lawnmower in the officers' garden. That I rather enjoyed. Meanwhile, I volunteered for the Second Front. But would they have me? You wouldn't believe the obstruction. I pointed out that my name was Happy Landing. They said that omens carried no weight in the counsels of the authorities responsible for planning the invasion of the Continent. They also said that there was absolutely no place for horses in modern warfare.

What about the Cossacks?

That's what I said. They said the Cossacks didn't have to cross the sea. I said that was quite irrelevant. If they could have Landing Craft, Tanks, they could have Landing Craft, Horse.

Happy Landing Craft, Horse?

Of course. Imagine how it would have cheered up the troops. Further, I said, in answer to your penultimate paragraph, if horses are quite out of the military picture, isn't it about time you stopped talking about horse-power?

How do you mean?

Well, all their blessed aeroplane-engines, and tanks and jeeps and what-not are measured in terms of "horse-power," aren't they? It's quite idle therefore to say that the horse, as such, has no place in the equipment of a modern field-force. The presence of at least one horse on the battlefield is evidently desirable, if only to serve as a convenient test of the claims put forward by unscrupulous manufacturers for any particular machine.

What did they say to that?

They said that while at first sight that might appear to be horse-sense, the view was not one which commended itself to the Army Council.

Red tape again.

You're telling me! So then I said that while it might be conceded that there were difficulties in fitting a horse into the actual assault stages of the operation in question it would not have escaped the notice of the Army Council that General Montgomery proposed to live in a caravan; and what could be more fitting than that that caravan should be drawn from place to place by a horse called Happy Landing? The caravan, presumably, would never be in the front line, and the proposal would cause a substantial saving of petrol, while the presence of a popular racehorse in the shafts of the Commander's residence could not fail to have a beneficial effect on the morale of the troops.

Did they turn that down?

Flat.

No imagination.

Imagination, nil. So then I said, at least could I be considered for the job of carrying General Montgomery into Berlin. It is vital, I said, that he should not make this epoch-making ride perched on the edge of some dirty little jeep, or even in a large car. Think of the artists—think of the Academy pictures! Think of the effect on the Germans, besotted with machinery as they are, when they see their conqueror ride in on a racehorse!

There's something in what you say.

Well, that went up to the War Cabinet, I believe, and I had quite a nice reply. They said that there was already a long and honourable list of horses who had volunteered for that particular task. Nothing, however, had been decided, but in view of my many services to the State I might rest assured that my offer would not be forgotten. Meanwhile, would I carry on with my ordinary duties?

Jolly good show. Well, then came the Derby. And if I may, I should like to congratulate you on your very fine effort.

The Derby? Oh, that was nothing. As a matter of fact—Am I being interviewed—or is this a private conversation?

Oh, nothing will appear—don't be alarmed.

Well, then, between ourselves, I could have won that race in a canter.

Then why on earth didn't you?

The old story. Frustration. I was bored stiff. Hadn't got my heart in it. I kept on thinking of Normandy, and that old caravan waiting for me. Just before the race I heard that Montgomery had got canaries and two dogs out there. And they won't let him have a horse! It made me mad.

I sympathize. Well, then I heard you were going to stud.

Well, yes, I did think of it. That, at least, I thought, would be a real war-job. And you know how it is, in war-time, you have a kind of urge to keep the breed going.

Quite. But what made you give it up?

The doodle-bugs.

I don't follow.

Well, my dear fellow, at such a time, could I go off and leave my public? It would have been a nice thing, wouldn't it, everyone whispering: "Oh, yes, the moment the doodle-bugs begin old Happy Landing goes off to a soft job in the North!" Oh, no! My public go racing, doodle or no doodle, and, much though it bores me, so does Happy Landing!

Well, that's a fine spirit, I must say.

Mind you, I don't say I like the things. As a matter of fact, I think they're after me.

Is that so?

Yes. I dare say they've heard about the Berlin business. Well, I'll tell you what happened. It was Thursday—no, Friday—

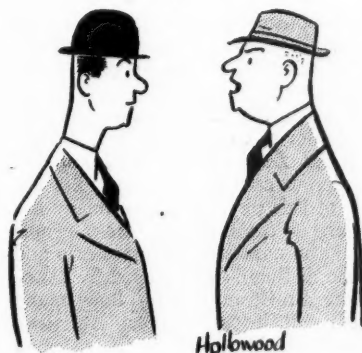
I'll have to go, old fellow. Got a train to catch.

No, wait a bit. About two o'clock in the morning one came right overhead, turned round and conked out above the stables. I heard a sort of robot voice—of course, we horses have got a sort of sixth sense, you know.

Of course.

Well, the voice seemed to say, "Is that Happy Landing's stable?" I stood perfectly still and didn't say a word, and, believe it or not, the noise started again, and the thing dropped near Mortimer's stable three miles away.

Most remarkable.



"... but for the life of me I can't think who it is. Anyway, the important thing is that he wished to be remembered to you."

Then the other day when I was having a gallop with Plain Jane—

Awfully sorry, old chap. I really must go.

Too bad.

Well, good luck. Let's see—when's the St. Leger?

September 16th, of course.

That's right. Well, I may see you then.

Not a hope. I'll be in Berlin.

A. P. H.

Memo to Organ-Blower

DEAR MR. HOGWORTH,—In full accordance with the socials sub-committee's desires I am passing on to you an important request which, knowing your ever-readiness to do anything to serve the chapel in a prominent way, we hope you will welcome with open mind. It has been your custom from time immemorial to leave open the blowing-room door while blowing the organ so that you can say hello or other greetings to those of us who have come to take your smiling face for what it is intended. Apparently it does not strike others that way because the christening party that is due at end of this month has intimidated to Mr. Tingle about having two palms or one laburnum put on the leeward side of the doorway so that you will have some nice greengrocery to look through.

Although the happy pair are used to you yourselves they feel that anyone seeing you for the first time and not knowing your peculiar way of doing things and nature's idea of a blessing in the way of your features may be put off from the solemnities of the occasion, and it may upset the infant's outlook on life with frightful associations. The way they put it shows some little misunderstanding of the fact that your blowing of the organ is the one thing that makes you feel you have a claim to civilized activities and are not altogether so ungainly and toothsome a mortal as the unkind infer. The proposal made by one of our own newer members that you take a course in ballet to improve your pumping style savours of bitterness and Mr. Tingle thinks that as the young parents have offered to go up to five pounds for your palm it is a good way out, and we feel sure you will look on it in your usual smiling way.

Otherwise we shall have to shut the door.

J. TINGLE, Deacon.

At the Play

THE OLD GUARD

ANYONE in London six weeks ago could have chosen from thirty plays, musical comedies, and revues. To-day, only one-third of them remain. They are survivors of a nipping midsummer frost which removed, temporarily at least, such vigorous plants as Mr. Novello's *The Dancing Years*—this war's reply to *Chu-Chin-Chow*—and the most plausible of modern murder plays, *Uncle Harry*. True, plans for the future already bristle. We shall have Mr. Bridie with a local Brains Trust and at Camelot, Mr. Gielgud again at Elsinore, Miss Anna Neagle demurely among the Janeites, Mr. Ralph Richardson as Ibsen's Peer. There is excitement enough ahead; but for the moment our thoughts rest with the Old Guard, holders of the theatre's hedgehog positions between Aldwych and Shaftesbury Avenue.

During the last war Mr. Oscar Asche's Arabian night *Chu-Chin-Chow* held in fee both the West End and the gorgeous East. It long outlived the Armistice: when its run reluctantly ended it had lasted for 2,238 performances. Other lights of the period were *The Maid of the Mountains*, in which love and Miss José Collins found a way at Daly's for 1,352 nights and matinées; the wildest of farces, *A Little Bit of Fluff*; the sentimental enticements of *Romance*, a play in a manner which the modern stage cannot match; the Oxford Theatre's *Better 'Ole*, and such productions as *The Boy*—Pintero's farce *The Magistrate* as a musical romp—the famous revues in which the great big world kept turning at the Alhambra, and *Seven Days' Leave*, a Lyceum game of I-spy and a downright affair of a type also lost to the stage.

The current theatre list—small but gallant—answers with two West End veterans, Mr. Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit*, a farce more sophisticated than *A Little Bit of Fluff*, and Miss Esther McCracken's *Quiet Week-End*, which reopens at Wyndham's on August 1st after a short break. Both of these, produced in July 1941 within three weeks of each other, have entered a fourth year. Some playgoers who saw them in their earliest weeks may only dimly remember their plots and purposes.

Mr. Coward's "improbable farce," now at the Duchess, has survived various changes of cast and theatre. Its strenuously happy medium, *Madame Arcati*—created by Miss Margaret

Rutherford and played to-day by Miss Beryl Measor—is still summoning that phantom of delight, *Elvira* the first Mrs. Condamine. In all spectral record there has never been a minx to rival this "delicious torment." She must have caused unimaginable havoc on the shores of Styx, especially among the more serious-minded and dramatic shades, *Hamlet's* father for example—how in Hades would the majesty of buried Denmark have coped with *Elvira*?—or the "blood-boltered" ghost of *Banquo*. None but Mr. Coward could have been audacious enough to present the situation of a husband plagued by the clashing of two wives, the quick and the dead. This dramatist, whom we value most for his present laughter, carries it off by his high (as well as his blithe) spirits and by his quick-witted invention, as mischievous as a poltergeist: he is more at ease as frivolous fantastic than as one of the stage's Elder Statesmen.

Hard behind comes *Quiet Week-End*. Some months ago its run was interrupted so that the company could go to North Africa and Italy. On its return the play again struck root. Miss McCracken seems to be the legitimate successor to Miss Dodie Smith. Her talent is for the small domestic piece, the frolic and the gentle. She has an eye for household mishaps and the pleasant love affair, and her comedy is another instalment of a family serial which began with *Quiet Wedding*. Miss Marjorie Fielding and Mr. George Thorpe are still the happily-married *Mildred* and *Arthur*; Mr. Frank Cellier appears as a J.P. involved in salmon-poaching. It may be hard to see why a piece which, like Barrie's *Treherne*, is "a second-eleven sort of chap," should have run for three years; but it is easy to recognize Miss McCracken's gift for making use of familiar material and for offering to the playgoer a home from home.

Third in the list, seventeen months the junior of *Quiet Week-End*, *Arsenic and Old Lace* continues its amiably murderous career at the Strand. The title of this piece of polite lunacy has become a catch-phrase; most people know the names of its impresario and of the distinguished cast led by Dame Lilian Braithwaite, but how many can recall its author—an American dramatist, Mr. Joseph Kesselring? For the rest, the roll is swiftly called.

In order of production we have *While the Sun Shines*, a highly professional Terence Rattigan farce at the Globe; the revue *Sweeter and Lower* (Ambassadors) with Miss Hermione Gingold as its bright particular scorpion; Miss Sonia Dresdel's own Borgia orgy in Miss Joan Morgan's idea of life in the suburbs, *This Was a Woman* (Comedy); *How Are They at Home?* (Apollo), with Mr. Priestley in his friendliest and least argumentative mood; the pyrotechnics of *The Last of Mrs. Cheyney* (Savoy), the Sadler's Wells Ballet at the New, and in Regent's Park the latest *Twelfth Night*—with Mr. Thesiger's *Malvolio*. The Windmill Theatre's *Revuedeville* can still advertise "We never closed," and finally, off Trafalgar Square, there is that strange entertainment *Peek-a-Boo* (Whitehall) which needs only the barest reference to Miss Phyllis Dixey, "England's popular pin-up girl," and the arch (so very arch) priestess of the Artistic Pose. J. C. T.

Music in London

PROMENADE, PLEASANCE AND ARMCHAIR

WHEN the cheers of welcome and Berlioz' "Carnaval Romain" had ushered in Sir Henry Wood's fiftieth summer "Carnaval de Londres" none of the audience that crowded round the Albert Hall rostrum "exulting, trembling, raging, fainting" (in the words of Collins) dreamed that this Jubilee season of the Proms would last a mere three weeks. But so it was, and shadowy wraiths of the traditional Wagner, Brahms, Bach and Beethoven programmes to which we had looked forward are now broadcast nightly to remind us of what might have been. Sir Henry (to quote Collins again),

"Like Melancholy, sits retir'd
And from his wild sequester'd seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Pours through the mellow horn his pensive soul."

Before he was riven from the sight of his devoted audience by German Kultur we had, however, heard several new works including a pleasant and melodious violin concerto from America by Samuel Barber which was played by Eda Kersey, whose tragic and untimely death has deprived us of our leading woman violinist.

Since the Proms dwindled to broadcast skeletons the most important work we have heard is the Eighth

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

Symphony of Shostakovich. The composer has said that it is an expression of his credo "All that is beautiful will triumph." The first movement is presumably intended to describe the obstacles which stand in the way of the attainment of this happy state of affairs, and probably also the length of time it will take to overcome them (two five-year plans at least). It is a typical Shostakovich steam-roller, steely-grey, inexorable and hard, and lasts a full half-hour. Towards the end, it is true, it relents when a cor anglais raises its voice in protest, like the singer in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony—"Friends, why these sounds?"—a sentiment with which one is heartily in agreement. The last four movements—a march and trio, a scherzo which explodes into a set of lyrical variations (this movement is the best of the five) and a placid finale—are evidently designed to soothe the listener after the grilling ordeal of the first. At a first hearing one has the impression that this symphony is a great improvement on the "Leningrad," but does nothing to alter the opinion that nearly all Shostakovich's music since the First Symphony is either disagreeable or commonplace.

Since music on the grand scale was driven from the arena it has taken refuge in the pleasaunce. The weekend concerts arranged by C.E.M.A. in the William III Orangery at Hampton Court Palace, given in turn by Alec Sherman and the New London Orchestra and Dr. Reginald Jacques and his string players, were entirely delightful and the performances had all the elegance and finish of their surroundings. The programmes, as was fitting, were drawn predominantly from eighteenth-century music and were excellently chosen. At one of Mr. Sherman's concerts (whose principal item was Mozart's G Minor Symphony) it was curious to note how strangely out of place the Siegfried Idyll sounded, but this was perhaps because the sound of horns in the narrow panelled gallery was as overpowering after the coolness of Gordon Bryan's Oboe Concerto on Themes of Scarlatti as the blast of heat from an open furnace-door. Leon Goossens was the soloist in the concerto and in another by Marcello, and played as beguilingly as ever.

One of Dr. Jacques's programmes began with Boyce's gay little Symphony in B Flat which he made so joyous and sparkling as to give the lie direct to anyone suspecting him of the remotest resemblance to his melancholy Shakespearean namesake. His players' full round tone and zestful attack sounded very well in the



"Sall right, gw'nor, the All Clear's gone."

Orangery. In addition to a Suite arranged by Dr. Jacques from various works of Bach the programme contained Sibelius's "The Lover" (Rakastava), who always seems to have icicles in his beard and to be stamping about to keep his feet warm until he finally disappears in a flurry of snowflakes. An unsatisfactory and chilly swain, one feels. But there is no doubt that Handel and his interpreter Mr. Eric Greene were right in their melodious assertion that when "thou art troubled music will calm thee"—particularly when one can listen and look out of a tall window on to smooth green lawns and processions of yew-trees, and in the interval stroll in a walled garden

and feast one's eyes on a riot of delphiniums and rambler roses. Music on a small scale is made for such surroundings, and the thrush's descant outside the window adds to it rather than otherwise. One hopes for further developments of C.E.M.A.'s happy idea. D. C. B.

"Mr. E. R. Williamson, one of Scotland's best-known fanciers, presented a cup for the best average over the four races, and the popular Mr. Tracey, of Cupar, followed by presenting another for the longest race. Alex Mitchell, Federation sec., gave some useful advice."—"The Racing Pigeon."

Not to be outdone.



"They'd love a marker, wouldn't they?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Bishop Pollock

IN his introduction to *A Twentieth Century Bishop: Recollections and Reflections*, by Bertram Pollock, late Bishop of Norwich (SKEFFINGTON, 12/6), Mr. HAROLD NICOLSON says that Dr. Pollock had no desire that his memoirs should be read as an expression of his life and character, and agreed with Lord Snell in thinking that the meaning of life seemed immensely more important than its incidents. An autobiography which conveyed nothing of the writer's character and excluded the incidents of his life would make rather bleak reading. Fortunately Dr. Pollock's practice was better than his theory, and though his reminiscences are desultory and un-co-ordinated, doubtless because he did not live to revise them for publication, and deal almost exclusively with his public life, they throw a good deal of light both on his character and his career. Appointed to the Mastership of Wellington College when he was only twenty-nine, and almost the youngest member of the staff, he transformed it from an easy-going place in which the older boys did as they pleased into, as Mr. NICOLSON puts it, "one of the most disciplined, if not one of the most enlightened, institutions in the country." The Prince Consort had taken an active part in the foundation of Wellington College, and, as he shows in his chapter on King Edward VII, Dr. Pollock succeeded in re-establishing and strengthening the connection between the school and the Royal Family. But his most interesting chapters are those on discipline and punishment. Although autocratic, and apparently somewhat of a terror to his colleagues, he put a good deal of subtlety into his management of the boys. "Silence," he says, "I found a most useful instrument for discipline." He would keep a boy waiting to hear what his punishment was to be, and by the time the boy had "conjured up every kind of far-fetched possibility," his will to further mischief was paralysed, if not for ever at least for a long time. He disliked punishing a boy who had not admitted his guilt, and on one occasion made a boy repeat his affirmation of innocence at half-hourly intervals throughout a long summer afternoon, until the

culprit could sustain the ordeal no longer. On the whole, his reminiscences of his episcopate at Norwich lack these enlivening touches. Having noticed that bishops and deans are apt to get at variance with one another, he made up his mind that he would never quarrel with a dean. Looking back upon the Deans of Norwich he had known, he was, he says, grateful for much in his association with them. The reader may feel a hiatus at this point, and regret that the writer did not fill it in. H. K.

China, Our Creditor

The international give-and-take of the future will owe much to such books as *China and Britain* (COLLINS, 8/6) in which the China of all ages is introduced to the Britain of to-day. Sir JOHN PRATT gives a sympathetic report of our side of an historic intercourse. The so-called Opium War and, possibly, the treaty-port mind are, he feels, its only dingy aspects. But his vivid many-sided and beautifully illustrated book is not particularly concerned with China's obligations to us. After all, it was China's contempt for our barbarous exports that brought about the recourse to opium. It is China's services to England which are rightly given prominence here. Unluckily our eighteenth century—which saw the first "factory" in Canton—was not an era of enlightenment. So England imported *chinoiserie* and ignored a philosophic wisdom that might have served us even better than the classics. Now, when the family is taking all the hard knocks, it is exhilarating to read of a four-thousand-year-old civilization founded on the family welded by religion. Our artistic debt to China has never been underestimated; and here it is amplified by a delightful chapter on the European botanists who wrote *Sinensis* after such an incomparable wealth of lilies, primulas, peonies and rhododendrons. H. P. E.

James Agate's Dramatic Criticism

Red Letter Nights (JONATHAN CAPE, 12/6) is "a survey of the post-Elizabethan Drama in actual performance on the London Stage, 1921-1943," and is therefore a companion book to last year's *Brief Chronicles* which surveyed the Elizabethans. Together these two volumes give us Mr. AGATE's dramatic criticism at its wittiest and most just. The new book is just as good as the other, and here again we have Mr. AGATE being shrewd, perceptive, allusive, and all the time and everywhere Agatian. Dramatic critics may conveniently be divided into three classes. The highest or first class have something significant to say and a notable style in setting it down; the second class have either much matter and little style, or little matter and much style; the third-class critics have neither views nor elegance. Mr. AGATE at his best belongs to the rare top class. He can sometimes, it is true, write inelegantly. But it is most often with a deliberate inelegance, and when he refers to the Greek tragic poets as "Æschylus and that lot" his habitual readers know that he is deploying a philistine phrase because he knows it teases. This book, like its complement, is happily arranged in sections—Restoration Plays (with a surpassing pen-picture of Edith Evans's "Millamant"), Ibsen (an exhilarating and suggestive survey), Foreign Plays, New Plays, and American Plays. A. D.

The World of a Poet

Reversing the proverbial "*si jeunesse savait, si vieillesse pouvait*," 100 Poems (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 6/-) keep their greatest certitudes for youth and their greatest activities for middle age. The *Christus Immanens* of

Mr. EDWARD THOMPSON's teens becomes the "some Power that watches" of his fifties. One has the impression of small, joyfully channelled beginnings and mature powers diffused—a gay little source and a magnificent but sombre delta. Between lies a man's life with a man's diversity of accomplishment. Landscape-painting, by a master of the Thyriss school, depicts not only an unspoiled Oxfordshire but the India, Mesopotamia and Syria of a soldier of the last war. Even more happily influenced (and this is the rarer gain) by the classic temper than the classic style, the poet acclaims Athene's owl in Athene's olive-bough and re-greets the heroic passage of a dozen armies on a bridge in Asia Minor. His critical spirit waxes as his human sagacity broadens. One could have done with more of the pleasant irony of "Royal Audience" and of character-studies as racy as "Water-Finders." The latest, "New Recessional," poems are an unforgettable indictment of the "cannon fodder and labour reserve" view of mankind; and "In the Guildhall of Babylon" the prophet's and poet's place in the industrial galère is indicated once and for all.

H. P. E.

The Annihilation of Man

Using the many opportunities for thinking which military service affords, Mr. LESLIE PAUL has analysed what he calls "the crisis in the West" with remarkable subtlety and insight in *The Annihilation of Man* (FABER, 8/6). His theme is, briefly, that Nazism is not, as the left maintains, a special form of the attempt made by capitalism to maintain its power, but a pseudo-spiritual revolt against materialism, which began forty years ago with the German Youth Movement. "The spiritual crisis of German Youth," Mr. PAUL writes, "did not lead to a spiritual conclusion: the mysticism it embraced was earthy, it was oriented to the land . . . it was a religion of the body." Escaping from the Seylla of a bourgeois world devoted to money and security, it plunged "with all the fervour of a neurotic hankering after wholeness" into the Charybdis of violence and cruelty indulged under the cover of devotion to a myth of racial supremacy. But Nazism, Mr. PAUL argues, is only an extreme form of the modern sickness produced by "the theoretical annihilation of man and matter by science and the practical reduction of the individual to hopelessness and helplessness in a mechanized world." The cure he offers is less clearly stated than his brilliant analysis of the disease, and appears to consist in a return to a Christianity shorn of all the beliefs which distinguish Christianity and other transcendental religions from the elevated humanitarianism current in the century preceding the present collapse. Nevertheless, this is a book well worth reading.

H. K.

Lip-Watch

Lieut.-Colonel Sir BASIL BARTLETT, who wrote the script of a most deservedly popular film, has now turned it into a novel, published under the same title, *Next of Kin* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/-). The new form is just as vivid and should earn as much publicity, but its true success may be counted not only by sales figures but by how much we take warning. The story, for those who do not know it already, concerns one of our pre-invasion raids on the French Coast and tells how, bit by bit, little scraps of information leaked out through an officer and a private, and were pieced together by German agents, with the result that though the raid was successful "our losses both in men and craft were heavy." The author sums up by asking some pointed questions—"Were people perhaps a little shocked to hear of the unnecessary loss of so many lives? Did they judge themselves personally not guilty?"

Have the lessons of victory blurred the lessons of defeat? Is any man's life ever quite safe in the keeping of his friends?" The story itself is necessarily dramatic but not so dramatic as war, and the babblers seem to be quite nice people. There is nothing pretentious about the book, but the alert it sounds was never more needed than at the present moment.

B. E. B.

Dog Story

After the splendid fantasies of *Last and First Men* and *Starmaker* Mr. OLAF STAPLEDON has come down to earth and is not quite at home on it. In *Sirius* (SECKER AND WARBURG, 8/6) nearly everything is good except the total effect. It is the biography of a dog which has been endued with a brain of human proportions and intelligence and rather more than human sensibility. *Sirius* is essentially a pathetic figure. He is torn between the opposing strains of wolf and man in him; he desires bitches and loves only the girl with whom he has been brought up; he can think and plan, but he has no hands with which to carry out. He is not even a creature born out of time; he is a freak and knows it. Mr. STAPLEDON devotes a great deal of attention to the qualities and handicaps of his creature, and is not in the least sentimental about it. Perhaps it would have been better if he were. For something, to the reader's astonishment, goes wrong and the tale misfires; the pathos is theoretical, not real; the tragedy of *Sirius* remains a diagram drawn on the blackboard. Why a book so well-found in many ways should go down almost ignominiously is not the mystery it may seem. Detachment, which is often a virtue, is fatal here. Mr. STAPLEDON takes no sides, he tells his story logically, and to him the case of poor *Sirius* is no more than "an unfortunate situation," an ingenious hypothesis to be worked out correctly. Unfortunately he also works it out without those brilliant intellectual flights that take the place of emotion in pieces of this kind. Fantasy may be bloodless, but then it must fly.

J. S.



"All the same, I don't think the French you learnt at school is getting us anywhere."



"There you are, Henry—this is the Lion House."

Ye Shall Know Them.

DURING our final lecture on Leadership we were told of a certain well-beloved officer who knew all his men by name, yea, down to the very lowliest. I made a resolution at that moment that as soon as I was commissioned I would get to know all my men by name.

On my first morning as an officer I was visited by a runner. He saluted, thrust a blue form on my table and said "Sir!"

"Ah," I said, "something for signature, eh?"

"Sir?"

"Want me to sign this, I suppose?"

"Sir."

"Right-ho." I dashed off a signature. "Oh, by the way, runner—"

"Sir?"

"What is your name?"

"Aitchison, sir."

"Aitchison, eh? I must remember that. Right-ho, Aitchison."

After he had gone I took out a bright new Stationery Office Book and entered upon its newly-ruled first page: "Aitchison, med. height, med. build, red face, shapeless hat, bulging pockets."

I closed my eyes for a minute, fixing the image. I felt I had made a start.

It was odd that I was destined to see more of Aitchison than any of my other men in those early days. The very next morning he was in to see me again in my capacity of Welfare

Officer. It appeared that Aitchison was the sole support of his mother, who had received a most threatening letter about an overdue account for artificial dentures. I was happy to be able to supply the man with a War Service Grant form.

That afternoon he was back, his face a little redder, perhaps, but his hat as shapeless as ever.

"What, again, Aitchison?" I said. "Why don't you do something about that hat?"

"Sir?"

"Your hat is shapeless; it wants ironing. But what it is you want?"

It seemed that an appeal had been made in Orders for instrumentalists for the Camp orchestra. Aitchison, who

played the euphonium, had come to volunteer his services.

"Splendid, splendid," I said. "Hand your name in to the Orderly Room next door, will you? I must come and hear you play some time."

"Sir."

He was no sooner gone than he was back again. Really, his pockets were much too bulky. I mentioned this to him, pointing out how the whole set of his uniform was impaired.

It appeared that choristers were required for the Camp choir. Aitchison, a baritone of some experience, wished to be considered.

"Jolly good," I said. "You're going to be a busy man!"

"Sir?"

"What with playing in the band and singing in the choir, eh?"

"Sir."

He saluted and was gone.

Half an hour later he brought me a cup of tea. I was glad to see that he had emptied his pockets.

After lunch the following day, coming back a little early to the office, I found him picking cigarette-ends out of my grate, the last lingering member of a fatigue-party.

"Right-ho, Aitchison," I said—"you can leave all that for the present."

I waited for him to go, but after giving me a glance which I was unable to interpret he asked if he might have a word with me. I told him to go ahead, by all means.

He was having trouble at home, he said. His wife and his mother did not get on, it seemed. His wife had left the maternal roof, and his mother now intended to sell Aitchison's furniture to pay off the debt for Mrs. Aitchison's overdue board and lodging. It was very desirable that Aitchison should get home to unravel this domestic tangle.

"Come back later with a twenty-four-hour leave form made out," I said, "and I will sign it for you."

"Sir," he said.

He visited me three times during the afternoon. Once to answer my bell and take a letter to the post for me, once to sell me National Savings Stamps, and once to get his leave form signed. I dashed off a signature.

"See you back on Friday, then, Aitchison. How are your mother's teeth?"

"Sir?"

"I said, are your mother's teeth all right?"

"Sir."

I felt that I should miss him. I had noticed that he had ironed his hat, although his pockets had filled up again outrageously. Even so, I felt

that my leadership qualities were becoming well-established. It was a grievous surprise when he came before me on a charge the following morning.

More in sorrow than in anger I read the indictment and heard the evidence. I noticed that the sergeant who had marched Aitchison in looked very much like Aitchison, except for the stripes on his sleeve. The witness and escort looked exactly like him, except that they wore shapeless hats and Aitchison wore none at all.

"Aitchison," I said, "I am very much disappointed in you. After all I have tried to do for you, here you are, charged with displaying undarned socks and a soiled undervest on kit inspection. Service life demands a bit of give and take, you know. What about your mother's teeth, eh? What about your poor wife and furniture, eh?"

He hung his de-hatted head.

"You, a chorister, a euphonium-player; I had expected better things of you. And another thing—why aren't you on leave, eh? What have you to say about that?"

It was hard to tell whether his expression was one of bewilderment or remorse.

"Sergeant," I said, "let me see this man's hat."

The hat was brought. It was absolutely shapeless. I handed it back without comment.

"Three days' C.B.," I rapped. "March out!"

No sooner had the door closed behind the melancholy procession than it opened again—to admit Aitchison. Even as he saluted and thrust a blue form on my table I heard the command, "Escort, accused and witness, dis—miss!" ring out in the corridor.

The misgiving which had begun to shimmer in my mind suddenly crystallized, hard and bright.

"Aitchison," I said, "what is your name?"

"Sir?"

"Your name, man, what is it?"

"Freckleton-Price, sir."

"Right-ho, Freckleton-Price. Don't come in to see me again in that shapeless hat. Right-ho."

"Sir."

When he had gone I took out my Stationery Office Book and wrote: "Freckleton-Price, med. height, med. build, red face, shapeless hat, bulging pockets."

I closed my mind for a minute, fixing the image. Then, as an after-thought, I wrote in the "Remarks" column: "Looks very much like Aitchison."

I shall not give up.

J. B. B.

Selection Madness

WHEN I was first sent to school for instruction in such vital matters as Cricket and the Classics there was one widely-favoured diversion. This was the choosing of teams.

We wasted hours and exercise books in mustering the most formidable elevens of counties and countries, of England against Australia, of the world against some other planet, and finally of characters, Biblical, historical, and mythological, who had displayed qualities worthy of the cricket-field. I remember a batting-order headed by Horatius Cocles and the Duke of Wellington, while the opening bowlers were David and Polyphemus.

As I grew older I put this pastime aside with other childish things and interested myself in the more realistic side of cricket. A chap couldn't play about for ever. . . .

Yet I found to my astonishment that many of my elders, even snowy-haired ancients, continued to occupy their leisure with this boyish exercise on which I had squandered so much of my golden youth.

The correspondence columns of various journals offered constant evidence of this fact. Venerable gentlemen, sometimes holding high office in Church and State, were seriously engaged in choosing the best eleven left-handers, the best Under Thirty, the best whose names began with W, the best smokers, the best drinkers, the best—in fact the thing was becoming almost libellous.

These letters invariably provoked replies from other eminent persons, drawing attention to certain accomplished cricketers whose names had been omitted. Acrimonious discussions followed—and so it went on.

That was peace.

But you would think—or wouldn't you?—that with the outbreak of Hitler's war this fever would die down under the bombs and the paper famine.

Well, it hasn't. An experienced sporting critic has actually written a book which is nothing but a collection of cricket-teams and explanations of why he chooses them. Not only that—but it is being sold for fifteen shillings a copy at a moment when the world's most momentous battle is in progress.

All this, as you may suppose, is leading up to something. Yes, you are right and, after all, I have every excuse.

I am going to choose my team.

Needless to say, it will differ from

all other teams chosen by anybody anywhere. It will be unique, creative and dynamic.

Now, looking through the saga of Cricket, what do we find most important?

I say Originality—the genius that leaves its mark on our national game. If, for instance, I choose W. G. Grace as my captain it is not because of his unrivalled all-round accomplishment, nor even for his bearded magnificence and overwhelming personality. I choose him because, in the language of Mr. Cardus, he “orchestrated the folk-music of cricket” and by his peculiar achievements built up the modern game.

He then is my first choice.

Now for a bowler: and I begin with David Harris. Why? Because he was “the greatest bowler ever known”? Not entirely. Rather because he invented the length-ball which reformed batsmanship. The answer to that ball was the upright bat, wielded (and manufactured) by John Small, whose fiddling could tame a savage bull, even as his batting style mastered the new attack. He is my next choice, being also largely responsible for the introduction of the third stump; and with him enters yet another musician, Tom Sueter, not only the pioneer of wicket-keeping but a left-handed batsman and the first to leave his crease and get to the pitch of the ball.

Supporting Harris, another representative of the under-arm school, is William Clarke. Again, his phenomenal feats—2,385 wickets taken for the All England XI which he formed

in his forty-eighth year, 476 in 1854 alone, and one with the last ball he bowled—are less of a qualification for my team than his masterly spy-work on his opponents at practice.

“I have summed them up,” he would report, “and they are worth...”

The first stage of the bowling revolution is honoured by the inclusion of Tom Walker, who showed genius and adaptability by anticipating the new style of bowling and, when this was disallowed, evolving a slow “flighted” attack which was almost as destructive. As “Old Everlasting” and the hardest man to get out, he opens the innings with the captain.

My attack must then include either John Willes or—if his immortal spirit upholds that angry decision to abandon cricket which he proclaimed when riding away from Lord's in 1822—his sister, who, bowling round-arm on account of her costume, inspired that far-reaching exploit.

Edgar Willsher, who, forty years on, “downed tools” on being no-balled and thus forced the M.C.C. to allow the arm full freedom, is my next bowler, while B. J. T. Bosanquet, the pioneer of the googly (still called a “Bosie” in Australia), comes—chronologically—last.

Two batsmen remain. These are “Long Bob” Robinson, who first wore pads and spikes, and “Shock” White, who was once the leading actor in a memorable scene, when he produced a monster bat, obscuring the wicket, and so regulated the dimensions of the blade.

Well, there you are! On some

Elysian meadow that epoch-making eleven would bat as follows:

W. G. Grace (Gloucestershire), Captain.

Tom Walker (Hambledon)

Tom Sueter (Hambledon)

John Small, senior (Hambledon)

Robert Robinson (Hambledon)

Thomas White (Surrey)

B. J. T. Bosanquet (Middlesex)

John Willes (Kent) or (in the event of refusal)

Miss Willes (Kent)

Edgar Willsher (Kent)

William Clarke (Notts)

David Harris (Hambledon).

It contains four left-handed batsmen, one left-handed bowler, and one really bad fieldsmen—Clarke, who considered that once he had bowled the ball he had done with it.

Still, you can't have everything, when originality and genius are the test of eligibility. . . .

But stay! *Can you not?* Even while I write these words I see as in vision the poised pens of a choleric multitude preparing to give me the lie.

All right, chaps—it's your turn again!

o o

The Summing-Up

“When Mr. Devis asked respecting the Association's views on post-war policy in connection with licensing and registration, President Walker replied they had been holding what he described as a marathon meeting since the beginning of the year, and 99.9 had shown themselves totally opposed to it and only 1.1 in favour.”

The Meat Trades' Journal.



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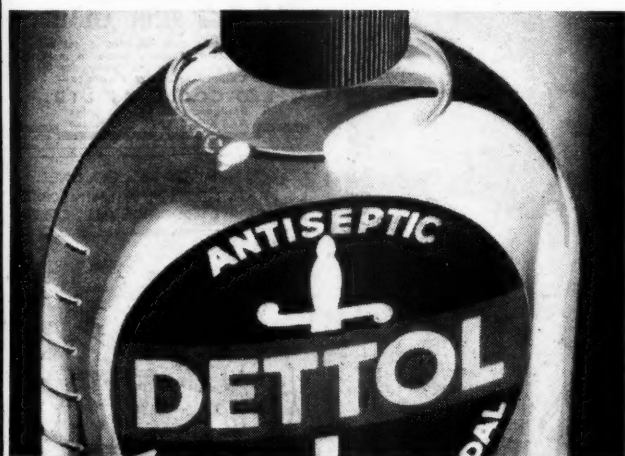
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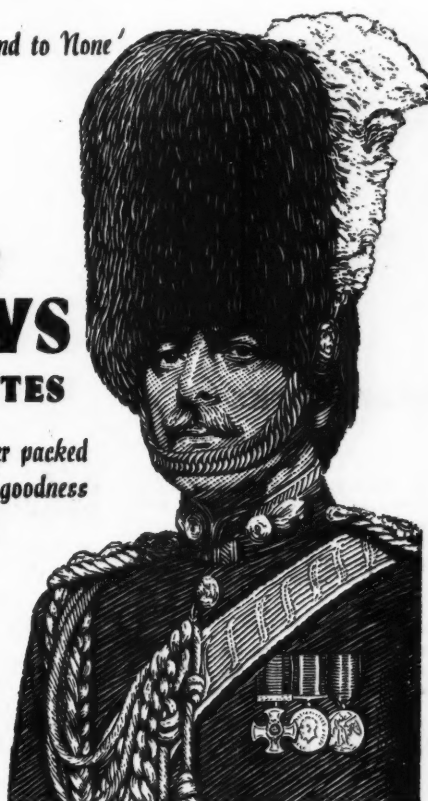
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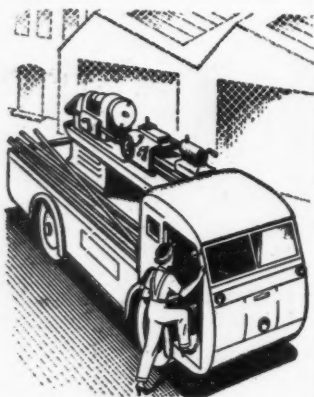
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